

**Opening Remarks**  
**The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Chairman**  
**Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
**Briefing on: “Assessing China’s Behavior and its Impact on U.S. Interests”**  
***January 19, 2011***

Welcome to my Fellow Members of the Committee, our distinguished panel of witnesses, honored champions of the struggle for human rights in China, who are joining us today, Ladies and Gentlemen.

There is an old saying that the Chinese invoke when they wish to avoid political discourse with the central powers in Beijing:

*“The mountains are high and the Emperor is far away,”*

Well, ladies and gentlemen, this morning there are no mountains to shield us, as China’s newest Emperor has just landed in Washington and is at the front lawn of the White House.

And the pressing issues which separate our countries need to be urgently addressed.

Three of those many issues, which will be the focus of today’s briefing, involve security concerns, human rights, and how our trade imbalance and Chinese currency manipulation adversely impacts the U.S. economy.

When the Cold War ended over two decades ago, many in the West assumed that the threat from Communism had been buried with the rubble of the Berlin Wall. However, while America slept, an authoritarian China was on the rise. China became one of our biggest mortgage companies, holding over nine hundred billion dollars of our national debt. And in these past two decades, Western observers forgot that, while freedom blossomed in Eastern Europe, reform in China failed.

China was led by a cynical group of leaders who, sobered by the Tiananmen Massacre and marked by the blood of its victims, were determined to go forward with economic, but not political, change. And the China that emerged has fallen far short of the benign China of which former Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick spoke in coining the phrase “responsible stakeholder.”

Does a responsible stakeholder, as reported in the Western press, allow the transshipment of North Korean missile components to Iran, via Beijing Airport, in open defiance of those UN sanctions which, as a Perm-Five member, it is duty bound to enforce?

Does a responsible stakeholder declare the South China Sea as one of its “core interests,” in open defiance of the navigational and territorial rights of its Southeast Asian neighbors?

Does a responsible stakeholder admonish the U.S. Navy that it cannot operate in the Yellow Sea, in the very waters where General Douglas MacArthur undertook the heroic Inchon landing which turned the tide of war?

Would a responsible stakeholder refer to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee as a bunch of “clowns,” for awarding such an honor to a distinguished Chinese human rights advocate? Would a responsible stakeholder arrest the wife of the Nobel Peace Prize winner as further retaliation for speaking the truth about gross human rights violations in China?

The U.S. took a big gamble when it voted for Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) for China over a decade ago, in what some termed “the most important vote since World War II.” The vote was based upon what I see as a sadly mistaken belief that economic openness and free market reforms would lead to democracy, respect for the rule of law, and a full array of political and human rights for the Chinese people.

Yet, today, as we meet here, the Laogai Research Foundation estimates there are close to seven million people currently in Chinese labor camps. It is as if the entire population of Switzerland were being held behind barbed wire.

Chinese authorities’ ruthless campaign against Falun Gong practitioners, a peaceful organization which promotes truth, compassion, and tolerance, has continued unabated for more than eleven years. I was proud to be the sponsor of a resolution in the last Congress, which received overwhelming bipartisan support, addressing the persecution of Falun Gong.

The brutal denial of rights to the people of Tibet and the Uyghur people, and the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees, continues to draw the attention of concerned citizens throughout the world.

And the American people have also borne the brunt of China’s mercantile trade policies, which promote trade surpluses through cheap exports based upon an artificial depreciation of China’s currency. Jobs and American dollars have flown across the Pacific to China for the past two decades as the American people have suffered high unemployment and a diminished standard of living. Last fall I was pleased to be able to vote in favor of the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act, which overwhelmingly passed the House 348 to 79.

We are back with a new energy from our newly-elected Members who are determined to take back America’s economy and are committed to a foreign policy that stands with our allies and holds accountable those who threaten our Nation’s security interests.

Now, I turn to the distinguished Ranking Member for his comments.